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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the position of the African American male in three categories identified as critical indicators in assessing important sociological trends. For each of the following indicators, the report gives a general, comparative, and projective analysis: (1) economics and labor; (2) education; and (3) incarceration. The section on economics and labor looks at reasons for the rising disparity among groups and their present economic welfare using statistics from the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Department of Labor. The section on education addresses the historical context for controversy in education; elementary school, primary school, and secondary school education; 2-year versus 4-year institutions; and financial support for African Americans in higher education. Also included in this section is an analysis of the African American male in the educational system and the possible need for alternative schools for this population. The section on incarceration presents general data on the rate of incarceration nationwide as well as specifically for African American males. A conclusion summarizes the points made earlier, notes the many accomplishments and achievements of African American males, and describes the work still to be done. Included are 105 references. (JB)

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AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES:

A Demographic Study and Analysis

Robert L. Green

and

Denise L. Wright

March, 1991

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This paper was commissioned by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to provide demographic and status data for its national workshop on African-American Men and Boys, March 27-29, 1991. The work presented herein on African-American males is one aspect of the Institute's ongoing research on educational, political, and social issues that affect urban minorities. Sections of this information have been drawn from our research and data from the Portland, Oregon; Memphis, Tennessee; Cleveland, Ohio; and Detroit, Michigan Public School Systems.

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INTRODUCTION

"African-American males have historically been at risk since being brought as human chattel to what is now the United States. They were at risk from the time of their recorded presence in 1619, and unfortunately are still in a vulnerable state in 1990, three hundred and seventy-one years later."

> ***The Task force to Address The Decline of Enrollment and Graduation of the Black Male from Institutions of Higher education***
> ***January, 1990***

Racism in its purest form has tainted the integrity and progression of America. Perhaps Kenneth Clark, a noted black psychologist and pro integrationist, reflects on the state of the nation when he finally concedes that his vision of integrated, non-racist communities will not become a reality in his lifetime. Dr. Clark surrendered to de facto segregation of American society, feeling that the 50 years he devoted to his work was only a lost cause. However, the ravages of racism cannot be an "end all" explanation for our present situation. We as educators, teachers, scholars and parents should always keep in mind the residual effects of deliberate discrimination, but, more importantly, we must accept the responsibility for finding our own answers to the vexing problems of achieving parity and equity in American society.

Historically, there has been a paucity of research focused on the position and condition of African-Americans in the United States. Taking this a step further, there has been virtually no concentration of studies on the status of the African-American male. Most of the early research was directed toward trying to question or validate stereotypical personality characteristics assigned to black men, such as **low self-esteem, sexual superstuds, female dominated, athletically inclined or non-academic** (Parham & McDavis, 1987; Green, 1977). Recently, we have witnessed a focus of inquiry as it

relates to the plight of this group. Such inquiries have been based on the premise of the black male being "endangered," "disadvantaged," "forgotten," and a host of other descriptives. And not unlike these studies the data presented here are a definite indication that it is the larger society which has failed to protect the interest of the black male, and has shown little willingness to promote his welfare.

This, however, will not be a polemic paper. This collection of investigations will provide a cohesive framework of some of the more prevalent problems that affect the status of African-American males. Although the contents in this report by no means addresses all the issues, it is a beginning effort to prepare ourselves for the work that lies before us.

From a psychological and sociological perspective, delineating the cause and effects of the condition of the African-American male is crucial, particularly when there are such deleterious effects involved. Our approach to this topic is based on the premise that every level of the human experience, irrespective of race or ethnicity, is interdependent and interrelated. Therefore, we will examine the position of the African-American male in three different categories that we have identified as critical indicators in assessing important sociological trends for any given group in American society. The three categories are: Economics and Labor, Education, and Incarceration. It is in all these categories that there is a preponderance of interaction with and within these institutions among African-American males in America. Each section will give a general, comparative and projective analysis for each category in an effort to give cohesiveness to the statistical information.

ECONOMICS & LABOR

"No one knows what it's like to be a Black man in America..."

The Brothers in the African-American Community

GENERAL DATA

For African-Americans, the National Administration has lodged over a decade of assault on their economic survival and well being--with the support of most Americans. Although African-Americans made considerable economic gains between 1940 and 1970, these progressions have been eroded. During the 1980s the economic disparity between groups increased, and earlier gains by blacks were surpassed by other groups, e.g., whites and Asians (Bureau of Census, 1990; National Urban League, 1990).

This section will examine some of the reasons for the rising disparity among groups and their present economic welfare. The summary of facts and information contained here is largely from the Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Department of Labor. These data are primarily from sampling surveys of the nations' households.

Per capita income* is one measure of the well-being of the population, in this case African-Americans (Swinton, 1991). Real annual earnings** are another important social index and are a critical measure of hours of employment during the year, and real hourly wages. Annual earnings,*** which concerns the length and time of a person's

* Per capita income- is the division of the aggregate income of the population which yields the disaggregated average income for each person.

** Real annual earnings- critical measure of labor market success

*** Annual earnings- weeks and hours of employment during the year and real hourly wages within the labor market.

participation in the labor market, have a strong influence on the formation of families, marrying and the ability to support children at an adequate standard of living (Sum & Fogg, 1989).* Given that real annual earnings from employment are in most respects a superior measure by which to gauge and track changes in economic well-being, there is a need to assess changes in the real annual earnings of all young males, particularly African-Americans, over the past 15 years.

The early 20s traditionally have been a formative period in the lives of young adult men as they make their transition from the relatively unstructured youth labor market to career jobs. As real earnings increased, young men in each educational level and race/ethnic group were more likely to form independent households, become married and raise children (Sum & Fogg, 1989). Of all demographic subgroups of American males 20-64 years of age, all young adult men (20-29) have suffered the largest absolute and relative declines in their real annual earnings since 1973. Within this group, young African-American men have fared the most poorly (Sum & Fogg, 1989).

While we do not have disaggregated data available, the Census Bureau (1988) reports that the real per capita income for African-Americans was $7,500. For Hispanics, there was an increase in per capita income at $7,500; however, their median family incomes and poverty rates did not show a statistically significant change at $7,610. For white persons, there was a per capita income increase to $13,030.

* Sum and Fogg gave testimony for the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Family. They conducted an excellent and thorough investigation on the economic status of African-American males. Their findings will be cited throughout this portion of the report.

COMPARATIVE DATA

Economics & Education

African-Americans make up 10.1% of the United States' 112.4 million employed civilians. For the nation, they represent only 6.2% of its nearly 28 million managers and professionals and 8.5 % of its 3.3 million technical and related support staff (Simms, 1991).

In 1973, 3 of every 8 employed African-American males aged 20-29 were employed in the nation's manufacturing sector, a ratio which fell to 1 in 5 by 1987. In 1986, the retail trade and service industries were the dominant employers of African-American men (Sum & Fogg, 1989). Evidence shows that part of the declining labor market revenue of young men with 12 or fewer years of schooling has been attributable to demand side shifts in the industrial composition of new job opportunities. Substantial employment losses in the nation's manufacturing sector in the late 1970s and the early 1980s removed an important source of well-paying jobs for young men, particularly African-American men, who had become more concentrated than their white counterparts in the manufacturing (e.g., steel, automobiles, consumer products) sector (Graves, 1991; Sum & Fogg, 1989). Not all groups, however, experienced declines in year round full-time work. In particular, white non-Hispanics and those males with post-secondary schooling actually experienced increases in their year-round employment. In sum, the earning decline since 1973 has occurred among nearly all major subgroups of young men, most severely among African-Americans and for those with the least amount of education (Sum & Fogg, 1989, p.11).

The African-American underclass* counts among its core members a large

* Underclass can be defined as being persistently poor. It also has gained the common usage as a description of the inner-city poor, with the overtone that this segment of the population belongs to the "minority" groups. The underclass, in terms of mobility, are characterized as being stagnated, alienated from the mainstream of American life. However, no single definition exists.

proportion of those who have not completed high school. Within this group, 3 out of 10 who dropped out of school reported zero earnings, a rate roughly 2.5 to 6 times as high as African-American high school and college graduates, respectively (Sum & Fogg, 1989). Although the across-the-board rise in the fraction of zero-earners can explain a part of the decline in the real annual earnings of young adult males, it clearly cannot explain all of the variance in the decline. It is speculated that another source of decline in the mean real annual earnings of young men is the greater difficulties of African-American males in securing year-round full-time employment (Sum & Fogg, 1989).

Labor & Health

Injuries, intentional and unintentional, are among the leading causes of death in the United States. In the Executive Summary of the Subcommittee on Homicide, Suicide and Unintentional Injuries under the Secretary's Task Force (1984), major disparities were found in mortality between the majority population and African-, Hispanic-, Native Americans, and Asian/Pacific Islanders*. Homicide and unintentional injuries accounted for 35 % of the excess deaths for African-American males under 45 years of age, as well as a disproportionate number of males of Hispanic and Native American descent.

Despite these much higher death and injury rates, however, males identified as being a minority are at greatest risk of not being covered by health insurance. Three of every eight young African-American males lacked health insurance, and these numbers varied sharply by years of schooling completed. For example, nearly 1 of every 2 African-American males who had dropped out of school had no health insurance coverage versus 40% of African-American high school graduate and college graduates. Ironically, younger men have the greatest risk of health problems, e.g., substance use or

* Asian/Pacific Islanders include Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Asian Indians, Korean, Vietnamese, Hawaiian, Samoan, Guamanian.

assault, but are the least likely to be covered by any form of health insurance (Sum & Fogg, 1989).

This lack of sufficient health insurance is exacerbated by the fact that African-American males die from major diseases at rates that far exceed their white counterparts. In 1986, 89.4% more African-American males than white males died of cerebrovascular disease; 119.6% more of prostate cancer; 55.4 % more of pneumonia and influenza: 96% more of diabetes mellitus; and 70.5% more of chronic liver disease and cirrhosis (National Urban League, 1990).

African-Americans were also more likely than whites or Hispanics to have a work disability in 1988. A disproportionate number of African-Americans ages 16-64 suffered from a work disability (14%) in 1988; compared with 8 percent for whites and Hispanics. The proportions with a severe disability were 10 percent for African-Americans, 6 percent for Hispanics, and 4 percent for whites (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1989). Out of those with disabilities, about 45 percent of the African-American male workforce with a disability were covered by an employer health plan compared with 61 percent with no work disability. This pattern, however, was not evident for Hispanics.

The mean earnings for African-American males in 1987 with no disability was $16,200; those with disability averaged $11,880. Hispanic males rivaled their African-American counterparts with mean earnings of $12,210 with disability and $16,800 without disability (Census Bureau, 1990; Sum & Fogg, 1989). As indicated by the figures for income, Hispanic males fare better in the workforce than African-American males in that the probability of a disability status is less and their wages are comparable, although they are not comparable to other groups-- e.g., whites and Asian-Americans.

In essence, if one is not covered by any type of insurance, then in all probability he has no means by which to pay for medical attention. Given the rate of injurious incidents of African-American and other non-white male groups, this absence of coverage has a major impact both on levels of gainful employment as well as on mortality rates. Indeed, the extent of this impact can be gauged when we see that it is estimated that African-American males are not likely to experience the same life expectancy as whites until 2038 (National Urban League, 1989).

Economics & Family

Population Growth

Since 1790, the Census Bureau has taken a tally of the Nation's population. One of the functions of census results dictates the allocation of billions of dollars to states and localities, resources that are vital to the welfare of all citizens, but in many instances particularly so to non-white citizens.

The 1990 census will confirm that the growth rate of the African-American population has been faster than the growth of the overall population (National Urban League, 1991). According to projections, the African-Americans by the year 2000 will comprise 13.1 percent of the total population in the United States (Census Bureau, 1991).

Among larger groups, natural increase was the major factor in the growth of both whites and African-Americans from 1980 to 1988; while the increase of other races came largely from immigration, namely Asians and Pacific Islanders, as well as Native Americans, Eskimos, and Aleuts.

The nation's Native American, Eskimo, or Aleut resident population grew by an estimated 19 percent, or by 270,000, from 1980 to 1988; while the number of African-Americans increased by 13 percent followed by the Asian or Pacific Islander population by 7 percent, and the whites by 6 percent (Census Bureau, 1990).

There is a need to make note of the growth of the Native American population (which includes Eskimo and Aleuts) that occurred over the past three decades. Hundreds of thousands of Americans who considered themselves as white or African-Americans have changed their identity to Native American.* This phenomenon has more than tripled the count of Native Americans since 1960. Demographers have determined that this shift in self-identification is largely among those who live in urban areas and have little connection to a tribal organization. From 1980 to 1990 the state that showed the largest increase was Alabama with 117.7 % (Vobejda, 1991).

* This is an example of "race crossover," which is defined as changing one's racial designation. This practice negatively impacts the count of African-Americans in this country.

Overall the population is becoming less white and more Spanish-speaking. Immigration, mainly from Latin America and Asia, has accounted for a fifth of America's population growth in the 1980s (Ehrlich, 1988). The number of Hispanic* families show a significant increase compared to the rest of the population over the past decade rising to 59 percent (1980 to 1989); while African-American and white families grew by 20 percent and 8 percent respectively (Census Bureau, 1989). The Native American, Eskimo, or Aleut comprised less than one percent of the nation's 90.1 million households (Census Bureau, 1990). The youth segment of the work force is dwindling, but more of its future members will be African-American, Hispanic, or Asian, while the percentage of youth who are white declines (Ehrlich, 1988).

* According to the Population Survey the preponderance of Hispanics identify themselves as being white.

Family Income

Data on median family income provides information on the respective financial strength of racial and ethnic groups. Since the family is still the primary unit for raising children, these statistics are sometimes considered one of the best indexes of the well-being of the population (Swinton, 1991). The median real income of the different household groups are listed here in descending order (these are data from 1989):

Asian or Pacific Islander, $36,100; Whites, $30,410; Hispanics, $21,920; African-Americans, $18,080 (Census Report, 1990). The median family income of the Native American, Eskimo, or Aleut homeowners was $20,520 (Census, 1990). These figures should be considered in the light that the average poverty threshold for a family of four was $12,675 in 1989 (Census Bureau, 1990).

It is interesting to note that comparing the median family incomes between 1978 and 1989, the proportion of African-American families with income greater than $50,000 increased by 38 percent. Looking at the larger picture, the middle part of the income distribution shrank between 1978 and 1989. In other words, **the growth in the very lowest incomes matched growth in the very highest incomes** among African-Americans (Swinton, 1991).

In assessing the data one should take note that as reflected by per capita family income African-American incomes have not exhibited a steady rise in the past two decades, while nearly all other groups have experienced an increase (Swinton, 1991). Swinton suggests that part of this lack of increase may be attributed to the fact that African-American households are twice as dependent on some form of federal, state, or local transfer payment, subsidies, public assistance or assistance for children.

Economics + Marriage = Family Formation

As discussed in the previous section, there is a significant relationship between males' participation in the labor market and the formation of their families.

Some African-American economists have seen the benefits of looking at the "marriage" between economics and tenets of social psychology. Integrating these two disciplines allow inferences to be drawn, in determining how various changes can affect society at large.

Movement of young males into independent living quarters typically has been accompanied by changes in their marital status. As recently as 1974, a majority of all male high school graduates and dropouts would have been married and living with their spouses by age 22. The 53% of the 20-29 year-old males who were married and living with their spouses in 1974 decreased to 34% in 1988 (Sum & Fogg, 1989). Consequently, the median age at which a majority of young male school dropouts and graduates become married has risen to 27 (Sum & Fogg, 1989).

Fifty percent of African-Americans between the ages of 15 and 44 were married in 1960, but only 30 percent were married in 1988 (Simms, 1991). For African-American males under the age of 25, marriage is practically nonexistent today (Simms, 1990). This is most pronounced for young African-American men, especially those with 12 or fewer years of education.

Real annual earnings of young African-American men, especially those with no post-secondary schooling, has been more strongly correlated with their marital status than any other employment variable over the past 15 years (Sum & Fogg, 1989). For example, during 1987, only 3% of African-American males with no earnings, and 7% (ages 18-29) with earnings between $1 and $5000 were married. This ratio increases consistently with the level of income, rising to 29% for those with earnings between $10 and $15,000, to 39% for those with earnings between $15,000 and $20,000 and to over 50% for those men with an annual income of over $20,000 (Sum & Fogg, 1989; Graves, 1991).

Over half of all African-American men 20-29 years of age were living in families with parent(s) or with other relatives in which they were not the head of household. Similar to the relationship between educational levels and economic attainment, the living arrangements of young African-American men varied widely by their formal schooling (Sum & Fogg, 1989). For example, two-thirds of the African-American male dropouts and half of the high school graduates remained at home with their parents or other relatives versus one-third of the college graduates who were African-American (Sum & Fogg, 1989).

Limited real earnings and the absence of such essential employee benefits as health insurance decreases the attractiveness of such men as marriage partners (Sum & Fogg, 1990, p. 15). **These data indicate that the prolonged periods of economic stagnation have adversely affected the ability of a growing number of African-American males to live independently of their parents or other adult relatives, and has contributed to the relative rate of decline among those who marry.**

The relative decline of economic status has been a powerful determinant of those individuals and families who now live on the poverty line. Despite years of economic growth and decades of anti-poverty programs, a higher proportion of the nation's youngest children (greatest impact on those under six years of age) live in poverty at a rate higher than 30 years ago (Rich, 1990; Barden, 1990; Children's Defense Fund, 1990).

It is also interesting to note that since 1973 young men's marriage rates have declined by one-third and the proportion of births out of wedlock doubled (McKenzie, 1991). This has directly contributed to the significant number of children who will grow up with one parent at some point during their lifetime. In 1989, 19% of the white children and 55% of the black children lived with one parent. Children living with one parent rather than two were more likely to have a parent with low income, less education, higher unemployment, and be a renter rather than a home owner. (Census, 1990). In the course of their childhood, 86% of African-American children are likely to spend some time in a single-parent household, more than twice the rate for white children.

It should be pointed out that a slightly greater percentage of African American than white households consist of a male and his own children (National Urban League, 1990). There has been an 81 percent increase of African-American male householders (no wife present) from 1980 to 1989 (Bureau of Census, 1989).

Regional Income

Where a family lives has some impact on their economic welfare, as there are regional variations with regard to income.

In 1989, median family income for African-Americans ranged from a low of $18,301 in the Midwest to a high of $25,670 in the West. Throughout all regions, the income for African-American families declined between 1988 and 1989 with the exception of the South, which historically has had lower incomes than the rest of the nation (Swinton, 1991; U.S. Department of Commerce, 1989).

The regional trends in absolute income and the degree of inequality has been different among the chiefly four demographic regions during the 1980s.

During the 70s blacks had their highest and most nearly equal income in the Midwest. However, during the 1980s, the Midwest became the region with the lowest income and the greatest racial inequality. Incomes of blacks in the Midwest fell more sharply and recovered less than in any other region (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1989). African-Americans have their highest incomes and highest degree of equality in the Northeast and West, surpassing the peaks of the 1970s (Swinton, 1991).

The Undercount Issue

The problem of census undercounting should be a dominant issue for African-Americans, because it denies them their rightful share of political influence, economic resources and social services (National Urban League, 1990).

The undercount has been documented by various researchers (Fay et al, 1998; Citro and Cohen, 1985). Demographic analyses have revealed that 3 million African-Americans were not counted in the 1980 census, which represents an estimated 53% of the undercount. An aggregate count of the 1960, 70, and 80 census reflects that it was male population aged 20-54 who accounted for 73% of the undercount among African-Americans (Wilson, 1990). In the 1989 count, it was estimated that 25% of African-American children were not accounted for. Out of this, an estimated 16% of the black male children under 9 years of age were undercounted. There is virtually no undercount for white or "other race" children under 14 years of age (Wilson, 1990).

These large margins of error have important ramifications for many regions of the country and directly affect both the apportionment of funds to various cities and the livelihood of the community and family. Undercounting has cost cities with large African-American populations billions of dollars in federal and state grants. Detroit, New York, and Los Angeles, to name only a few, are among the cities that have been affected the most (National Urban League, 1990; Wilson, 1990).

There are disturbing speculations as to the consistent underenumeration of African-American males; however, they are beyond the scope of this paper.

PROJECTIVE ANALYSIS

The United States has experienced two major recessions within the last twenty years, 1974-1975 and 1981-1982. The last recession, largely the result of tightening the money supply, resulted in some of the highest unemployment levels since the Great Depression, 9.0% among whites and 19% among African-Americans (National Urban League, 1990). Aside from the recessions, there have been many other recent financial strains on the U.S. government--namely, the S&L crisis, with liabilities of 100 billion; the Persian Gulf War, and the global economic recession in concert with the fluctuation of political changes in Eastern Europe, Central and South America (Henderson, 1991).

The Tax Reform Act had a particular impact on those who earned the least as well as those who are unemployed. As of 1986, if one receives unemployment compensation, this benefit in its entirety has to be reported as gross income and taxed. Such a legislative initiative reversed a forty-year series of rulings in which unemployment benefits were exempt from taxation (National Urban League, 1990). This discriminates against workers in the labor force who are non-white and poor because this group is the first to experience any changes in the labor market. Further, this Act discourages the promotion of educational advancement, because educational expenses are no longer deductible unless required or condoned by a current employer. This ultimately penalizes workers who seek occupational transfer or mobility.

Although the economic constraints for everyone have been exacerbated by the state of international and national affairs, it is the African-American who has had the greatest difficulty trying to survive the fluctuations and uncertainties of the nation's economy. The impact of these economic stresses have impacted African-Americans at every socioeconomic level.

In a capitalist country, wealth is power. The overall wealth of African-Americans is a miniscule nine percent of the wealth of whites. African-Americans own barely

two percent of the nation's businesses and account for less that one percent of the U.S. total in gross receipts (Tidwell, 1991). This translates into little economic power and this lack of economic strength leaves African-Americans susceptible to discrimination by groups who do have significant amounts of wealth. (Swinton, 1991).

The bimodal distribution of family income, which we noted earlier, reflects increases at the lower and upper end of the spectrum. The educated, skilled, and people in a few selective industries have prospered, but the rest have not. This has caused an increase between the top half and the bottom half of the economic curve (Nussbaum, 1988). The transformation came during the 80s in the Reagan years, when programs for the bottom half of society suffered the deepest cuts. "Welfare" was not the catch-all program; it was, in fact, the manpower training programs that eventually caused the greatest disparity in the employment picture.

Lacking a strong community-based economy, African-Americans, more than many other group, are far more dependent on government for a variety of income transfer programs--such as education, Medicare, Medicaid, housing, business development, and transportation. These are the public/financial transactions of government which can enhance or depress, accelerate or slow developments in the African-American community (Henderson, 1991, p 77).

What affects the community directly affects the family. For example in 1989, there were approximately 1.2 million fewer African-American males of working age than there would have been if the proportion of men to women were equal. The lower male-to-female ratio for African-Americans means that there are fewer males to proportionately contribute to the community's income. These shortages have a significant impact on the African-American male's per capita contribution to his community.

It has already been shown that there is a major link between the relative economic condition of African-American males and the formation of their families. In this same connection, limited family income is a direct consequence of the limited individual

incomes of both African-American males and females. This affects to what extent and degree many families are able to care and provide for their children. Therefore, it is obvious that the inadequate and unequal incomes of African-Americans have important implications for the "survivability" of their families. (Swinton, 1991; Current Population Reports, 1990).

The irony in all this is that the majority of the workforce at the turn of the century will be largely women and people of color . Over the next 10 years it is projected that only 15% of the work force entrants will be native-born white males (Ehrlich, 1988; CDF, 1990; Bureau of Census, 1990)). But in a labor market that requires increasingly better trained workers, the pool of skilled and literate applicants is dwindling. And despite the growing percentage of people of color in the workforce, the gap between African-American and white unemployment rates has been widening, indicating that racial parity may never occur in this area (National Urban League, 1989).

Indeed, Swinton (1991) concludes in his investigation on the economic state of African-Americans in the 1991 National Urban League annual report that African-Americans will never gain parity or equity in terms of economic status...and this disadvantage is a **"permanent feature"** of the American economy (p 74). However, Sum and Fogg (1989) make the following recommendations in support of changes that are needed to strengthen the employment and earnings status of African-American males:

(1) Reduce the proportion of African-American men who enter adulthood without a high school diploma (enhancing literacy skills and exposure to the labor market);

(2) Increase college enrollment among African-American males (a must if the black/white male earning gaps are to be narrowed over the remainder of this century);

(3) Renew efforts to strengthen young family life through expanded housing, health insurance coverage, child care, and tax credits for children.

Finally, ***investing in families as units and strengthening the financial position of young married families with children should be assigned a national priority with clear quantifiable objectives for the year 2000 (Sum and Fogg, p 25).***

EDUCATION

'From the teaching of science the Negro was likewise eliminated. The beginnings of science in various parts of the Orient were mentioned, but the Africans' early advancement in this field was omitted. Students were not told that ancient Africans of the interior knew sufficient science to concoct poisons for arrowheads, to mix durable colors for paintings, to extract metals from nature and refine them for development in the industrial arts. Very little was said about the chemistry in the method of Egyptian embalming which was the product of the mixed breeds of Northern Africa, now known in the modern world as "colored people."

Carter G. Woodson
Miseducation of the Negro
1933

The teachers are unable to comply with a law that was put into effect back in 1972, that requires that Black history be taught in the Tennessee elementary and high schools. The findings are that "most teachers are ill-equipped to teach Black history because they were not exposed to it as children..."

"Memphis, Like the rest of the Nation, Finds Teachers Ill-Equipped to Teach Ethnic Studies"
Black Issues in Higher Education, 1989.

'If we can finance a war overnight, such as we did in the Persian Gulf--then surely we can finance a war against educational failure; poverty; and class, race, and sex discrimination in America."

Robert L. Green, 1991

GENERAL DATA

In 1991 we continue to witness the cumulative effects of the years of pedagogical failures, the tragic role of government in education policymaking, and the persistent racism that has shaped public attitudes over many years (Ratteray, 1989). At a time when jobs require higher levels of math, science and literacy than ever before, the economy is becoming increasingly dependent on the groups that often receive the poorest education (Ehrlich, 1988; Task Force, 1991; National Urban League, 1991; Minorities in Higher Education, 1989; Business-Higher Education Forum, 1990). In

illustration of pedagogical failure, just recently the Nynex Corporation New York Telephone Company had to test 60,000 applicants--many of whom were minorities--to hire just 3,000 people. Even though there are people who want jobs, many are dropouts and are not qualified (Bernstein, 1988). In 1987, according to the Committee for Economic Development, one million young people left high school without graduating, and most were unemployable. Another 700,000 received their diplomas, but were hardly more skilled than dropouts (QEM, 1990).

Historical Context

There are two critical junctures in the struggle over equality in American public education that were decisive regarding the course of education for **everyone** in the United States:..the conflict over manual vs. academic training and desegregation. These conflicts were fueled by the unfortunate fact that there was never any consensus among whites or African-Americans regarding the kind and extent of educational opportunities blacks were to receive in America.

As history has shown from chiefly the emancipation days to the present, African-Americans have been denied by law and custom equal opportunity to education (Green, 1977). In the late 1800s northern Abolitionists sent money south to assist blacks in their quest for knowledge. After the Civil War, the number of blacks seeking an education grew dramatically. This assistance from the North, however, was deeply resented by white southerners (one should make note that the Civil War was not fought by the ruling class to free the slaves...it was fought to check the ambitions of the Southern slave oligarchy) (Green, 1977, p 208). The abolition of slavery was the by-product of the conflict, not the cause of it (Baran & Sweezy, 1966, in M. Carnoy, 1972, p 274; Green, 1982).

In other words, the subsequent education of blacks here in the United States was borne out of the conflict between the two Anglo factions of the North and South over legal tender and who would have a stronghold over the economy of America.

Despite the political and power maneuvers between the North and the South, African-Americans took advantage of the educational opportunities. Prior to the Civil War some whites had demonstrated concern with the educational progress of African-Americans. But it was then that white legislatures, North and South, began earmarking tax dollars for white education, denying funds to black schools. This was largely in reaction to the blacks' desire for education being so powerful that no amount of legislation appeared to daunt their quest to read and write (Green, 1977).

In illustration, we point to the case of a nineteenth century Ohio legislative committee which rejected a petition to grant blacks a share of the state education. It conceded that this might first appear unnatural, and unbecoming a charitable, high-minded, and intelligent community,... but the security of government depended on the "morality, virtue and wisdom" of its white citizens, and ***the school fund should not be confused with charity***" (Excerpt Green, 1977, p 207).

The irony in all this was that it was the black taxpayer who was handing out the charity. The sixth Atlanta Conference for ***Study of Negro Problems*** in 1901 showed that from 1870 to 1899, blacks paid $25 million in direct school taxes and $45 million in indirect taxes, yet found it necessary to spend more than $15 million in tuition and fees to private schools to obtain instruction for their children (Excerpt Green, 1977, p, 208).

At the turn of the century, the controversy over educating blacks and educational funding abated somewhat when Booker T. Washington developed the concept of "industrial education." This position was clearly favored by whites (Green, 1977; Carnoy, 1972). Northern black leaders led by W.E.B. DuBois attacked Booker T. Washington, because they thought that he did not put enough value on classical education at Tuskegee Institute. Washington's philosophy was that the descendents of slaves needed to first acquire basic farming and construction skills that would enable them to become land and business owners (Peery, 1990).

Booker T. Washington's views as well as those of Hollis B. Frisell of Hampton Institute were instrumental in legitimizing the subordination of blacks in the industrial system, just as blacks had been subordinated through the sharecropping system during the post-Civil War era. This acquiescence was supported by and consistent with the Northern capitalist movement toward vocational education for the "less qualified," and with the potential for cheap docile labor in the South. Consequently, Washington attracted continuous funding from Northern philanthropics, such as the Peabody Fund. These philanthropics helped to build up Tuskegee Institute and other black industrial schools (Carnoy, 1972), whereas other institutions such as the Historically Black Colleges received virtually no funding (p 295).

As a result of these conflicting views, African-Americans vacillated between wanting school integration and school segregation; it depended on what they believed would give them more access to economic and political power (Newby & Tyack, 1971). However, the dominant sentiment among African-Americans was that integration would provide the type of access they needed. This goal was manifested in the push for integration that was taken all the way up to the Supreme Court.

The 1954 Brown vs Topeka decision allegedly swept aside legalized "separate and unequal" educational opportunities in America, and was ushered in as a initiating a new era in African-American history. The impetus behind the Brown decision was simply the desire of concerned black parents for better schools and the historical belief that a good integrated education could enhance their children's participation in the socioeconomic arena.

Nevertheless, in 1960, six years after the Supreme Court passed the legislation for integration, 60% of black Americans still remained substantially below the national norms of educational attainment. The eighth grade was the terminal grade for the vast majority of the South's African-American schoolchildren. Mississippi, with 81.4% of its black population having completed fewer than 9 years of school, ranked first in America in the educational oppression of African-Americans (Anderson, 1984). In 1991, 36 years later, we still have not achieved the educational quality and equality we initially sought. We must then ask ourselves, given the evident failure of the present school system, was integration the answer?

On the other hand, we must seriously consider the argument that the segregation of schools is only a disadvantage if it is part of an overall effort to subordinate a particular part of the population. For example, upper class whites are segregated into high-cost private schools, but rather than being subordinated by segregation, it allows them to build class mores and solidarity which strenghthen their self-esteem and prepares them for leadership roles in society. Similarly, segregated schools during Reconstruction allowed African-Americans to begin to overcome centuries of slavery by building black consciousness (Carnoy, 1972; Green, 1977).

Recounting to some degree the historical context in which African-Americans have received an education in this country provides an illustration of some of the contributing factors to the current educational status of blacks in this country. Percell (1977) notes that we must analyze how the social and economic stratification in this country has historically been perpetuated in the classroom. In this vein, it is our intent for the balance of this section to review all levels of educational access, from pre-primary to the doctoral level, and the impact of the "stratification" phenomenon on African-American males.

COMPARATIVE DATA

Elementary/Primary Education

Contemporary trends suggest that the elementary years are instrumental to a child's successful transition into middle school and senior high school. During the early years, a child's teachers and instructors can successfully nurture and develop self-esteem, enthusiasm, and a willingness to learn. In essence, the child's first exposure to education can have a long-term effect on a child's overall success, academically, socially, and economically (Task Force, 1990).

The Perry Preschool Program in Ypsilanti, Michigan, conducted a longitudinal study of 123 students who participated in the program between 1962 and 1967. Part of this study evaluated their progress as young adults. The study found that students who participated in the program had greater school success along with higher achievement tests scores, grade point averages, and lower numbers of failing marks than the control group. They also had less involvement with the legal system and less antisocial behavior and misconduct (Task Force, 1990, p. 36).

It is apparent, then, that there is an urgent need for children to become involved in some type of pre-school and kindergarten program. Women with children under 6 are the fastest growing segment of the labor force. Out of this segment, 79% of African-American women have their children in nursery schools (Wilson, 1990; Ehrlich, 1988). Given the changing structure of the family and with more than 60% of school age children having mothers in the workforce nationwide, comprehensive and progressive programs for children must be established. According to Bureau of Census data (1985), the percentage of 3 to 5 year olds enrolled in pre-primary school were 55% white children vs 56% African-American children (Wilson, 1990). The factor of the availability of nursery schools has the greatest impact on attendance for African-American children.

Despite its generally recognized importance, only 18% of eligible children are currently served by Head Start due to inadequate funding. However, Congress has appropriated approximately 1.5 billion for funding for the Head Start program. As a consequence, about 40 percent of all eligible children will be able to attend Head Start classes next year, and Congress has authorized future increases so that by 1994 virtually all eligible children will be able to participate in Head Start (Jacobs, 1990; Ehrlich, 1988).

Secondary Education

One half million students drop out of school in the United States each year (McKenzie, 1991). The Bureau of Census (1990) defines the attrition rate as the proportion of 10 to 12th grade students who drop out in one year. Certain large urban segments of the population have disproportionate rates of attrition and transition to two and four year institutions. Such urban areas as Detroit, Cleveland, Boston, Jackson, Mississippi and Chicago have some of the highest dropout rates in the nation ranging upwards to 40-50%. It is in these cities we find the large segments of African-American males.

Low-income males in both the African-American and Hispanic communities have extremely low rates of high school completion. According to 1988 data for dependent 18-24 year olds, 43 percent of low-income Hispanic males and 53 percent of low income African-American males completed high school (Carter & Wilson, 1989). For Hispanics, though, there were some improvements. The number of Hispanics who completed high school and college in 1988 were at all-time highs. About half (51 percent) of Hispanics age 25 and over completed four years of high school or more, the highest percent ever recorded (Census Bureau, 1990).

Since the mid-1970s, the enrollment of minorities in U.S. colleges and universities has increased—except for African-Americans. Attendance by this group has simply stopped growing. This was despite an increase in the total number of graduates and a fairly

stable rate of high school graduation among the African-Americans population (Keller, 1988-1989; Carter & Wilson, 1990; Bureau of Census, 1990).

To get a sense of the extent of the decline, the following 1989 statistics are highlighted from the latest publication of **Minorities in Higher Education (1990)**:

> During the last 10 years, the greatest improvement in standardized test scores SAT and ACT has been among African-American and Hispanic high school students.*
>
> Middle income African-American and Hispanic Americans suffered severe losses in their college enrollment rates, the largest declines occurring during the late 1970s and early 1980s.
>
> Between 1986 and 1988, the enrolled-in-college rate of African-American men climbed from 27.8% in 1986 to 31.7 % in 1987, then plummeted to 25% in 1988.
>
> At both low and middle income levels, African-American men experienced greater declines in college participation rates than African-American women.
>
> African-American males continued to show slight declines in bachelor's and master's awards between 1985 and 1987, the rate of decline slowed in comparison to the period from 1976 to 1985.
>
> However, from 1985 to 1987, there was a 13% increase in first-professional degrees for African-American males.

Unlike other groups, African-American females now outnumber African-American males earning doctorates.

Despite the support of Pell grants, aggressive affirmative action programs, and a 25.5 percent increase in federal aid to Historically Black Colleges (HBCU's) between 1981 and 1987, despite preferential admissions programs for African-Americans at most institutions, and widespread remedial and academic development programs for the underprepared, this did not increase the level of participation of African-American males in the transition from high school to college. This is in addition to the

growing number of efforts to provide full-ride fellowships for minorities at the graduate level, such as Florida's McKnight Fellowship Program and the Minorities Fellowship Program of the Big Ten state universities and the University of Chicago. None of those efforts however, have been able to prevent the decline of enrollment of African-American males in institutions of higher education (Keller, 1988-89, p 44).

Two-vs Four-Year Institutions

Examining differences in post high school experiences, we find that there are larger percentages of minorities, particularly African-Americans in two-year programs.

In a study conducted in 1979 of community colleges, it was observed that minority students were pursuing large amounts of vocational rather than a liberal arts curriculum, which negatively diminished transfers to four-year institutions (Lavin, Alba & Silberstein,1979). Then ten years later, a congressionally mandated report examining vocational education programs at two-year colleges concluded that about 51 percent of blacks enrolled in two-year colleges do not complete their intended field of study (Black Issues in Higher Education, 1989).

Analyses of data show that there has been an annual average of 194,000 more African-American females than males attending college since 1976. This figure is skewed even further for males attending four-year institutions. Forty-three percent of African-American males are in two-year programs and community colleges, where the rate of transfer to a college or university is barely 10 percent (Garibaldi, 1989).

Monetary Support

For African-American students over a five-year period the percentage receiving grants declined, while the percentage receiving loans increased.

For non-black students, however, more received scholarships and there was no decline or increase in the number receiving grants or loans (Task Force, 1990). As should be evident, having to obtain larger and larger loans places a greater burden on students from families who do not have alternate and adequate sources of income. As we will show, this reduction of grants is having a negative effect on the rate of the participation of African-Americans.

Native American males are also a diminishing portion of the college community. This group lacks the federal, state and institutional support to a greater degree than African-American and Hispanic men (Wiley, 1989). To provide one illustration of why this is so, we note that since Indian lands are held in trust by the federal government, homes owned on reservations cannot be used as collateral to secure bank loans (p 8).

Furthermore, there is the issue of the many African-American students who end up not going to college simply because they fill out the aid forms improperly or find them confusing and/or are confused about college costs (Task Force, 1990).

Regarding scholarships and grants, an informative study conducted in Maryland entitled ***'Trends in Financial Aid Among Blacks and Non-Blacks in Maryland '**** is perhaps reflective of national trends. The major findings of this study indicated that:

> Scholarships and grants are preferred over employment and loans.
>
> Scholarships and grants tend to facilitate undergraduate persistence for minority students.
>
> From 1981 through 1985 the percentage of African-American students taking out loans increased while the percentage of those receiving grants decreased.

Keller, M. (May, 1988). Trends in Financial Aid Among Blacks and Non-Blacks in Maryland. Paper presented to the 5th Annual NASSGP/NCHELP Research Network Conference, p 8.

For non-Black students, more of them received scholarships and there was no decline or increase in the number receiving grants or loans.

The number of African-American students receiving aid declined, while in contrast, the percentage of non-Black students receiving aid increased.

In reference to scholarship programs for the state of Maryland:**

Scholarships totaling 1.46 million went to 2,094 students who did not qualify as needy.

While relatively affluent students received money, the state did not assist 2,738 eligible students who needed a total of $12.8 million in financial aid. On the average, each applicant needed $4765 to afford college, and one-third came from families with annual incomes of less than $12,000.

Only 15% of all Maryland scholarship winners attended private colleges or universities. But students at those schools collected 28 percent of the state's scholarship money--more than $4.7 million.

African-American students received relatively small scholarships compared with whites, even though their families had significantly lower incomes. Black students received an average grant of $779, compared with $983 for whites. Yet the average family income for black scholarship winners was $18, 239, compared with $28,733 for whites.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that the college tuition of the 1980s increased twice the rate of inflation. This was compounded by the fact that the federal government cut back significantly on the grants awarded to students. ***(Also see "Shift in Aid Policy Hurt Poor Students, Report Concludes"--Chronicle of Higher Education, March 7, 1990).***

** African-American Men and Higher Education in Maryland-Montgomery County, Maryland, Task Force, 1990, p 34--The Washington Post Study. The study cited two reasons for the findings. Maryland's scholarship funds are in the hands of the state politicians, who obviously award a great deal of scholarship money to affluent students who do not need aid. The second reason rests with the fact that the system or government agencies responsible for administering the distribution of aid simply do a poor job.

The African-American Male in the Educational System

Societal Perceptions Affect Educational Policy

Belief systems are the framework upon which cultures and societies function (Locust, 1990). For the past 40 to 50 years, Americans have been bombarded with the belief that African-American children are deficient and do not have the ability to achieve as other children. The pervasive deficit model that has shaped so many of our public and private policies has persisted from the founding of this Nation to the present. Social scientist and educators have "bought in" to this belief by perpetuating the attitudes and mores of the larger society. Both directly and indirectly, the children have suffered and society has suffered (Ratteray, 1989; Boykin, 1984).

Cited in Keller (1988-1989), Tyrone Taborn, publisher of U.S. Black Engineer, observes that **"From inner-city school kids to the freshmen at Harvard University, an overwhelming percentage of black students simply do not believe they are as smart as whites."** (p.54). This is a very powerful statement and having been educators for many years, we can attest to how accurately this statement identifies the product of the pervasive effects of racism. Education is inextricably linked to economic and political forces in the wider society. Since the school is a major socialization agent, during the course of a child's lifetime (aside from the family), it is the school where the child learns a sense of self-worth, self-identification and anticipates their eventual experiences as an adult.

It is within this framework that we will explore some of the current trends, myths, and alternatives for the African-American male; for we feel that it is he who epitomizes the type of disenfranchisement and "legitimized stratification" we have witnessed in our urban public schools.

Self-identification is an all-important process. It contributes to the development of personality, maturity and self-concept. Part of this process begins in a historical

context. The citations at the beginning of this chapter on education refer to the deliberate omissions in regard to history and represent the type of curriculum that is not only inaccurate but highly inadequate. Many believe, and it is perpetuated by those in the educational system, that African-Americans have inherited no culture of their own, primarily because it did not take the same form as the written history of European Americans (Ratteray, 1989). In some instances, such as during "Black History Month," educators try to provide some type of cultural diversity in the schools; however, the cultures of Asian- African- Hispanic- and Native Americans are seldom treated equally in the curriculum, on the classroom walls, or in the hallways (Locust, 1990, p 6).

For example, in Twinsburg, Ohio, during Black History Month the school board decided to not recognize this observance, but replace it with "Multicultural Awareness Month". But the principal activity for the school district's Multicultural Month was simply the offering of different kinds of food. This illustration is quite typical of the kind of attention given to social and cultural diversity, whereby these central issues are treated as add-ons to social studies or history lessons, or to peripheral cultural events. This sends a message to the child that people of color have not contributed anything of meaning, that their contributions are not worthy of "real" learning, and that "real knowledge" is largely the domain and legacy of Euro-Americans (Locust, 1990, p 6; Nichols, 1991).

Even as early as pre-school, children begin to perceive the differences in the way others are viewed in comparison to the dominant culture. As Kunjufu (1986) points out in his book ***"Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys"***, black males as early as the fourth grade begin to show symptoms of the ***failure syndrome***. It is by this time they have become cognizant of the lack of investment on the part of the school and the teachers in their learning process.

Generally, urban (public) school settings have been characterized as being cold and unforgiving to African-American male youngsters. Too often these youngsters are

viewed by white teachers (and black teachers who subscribe tothe existing model of administration) as a nuisance. Moreover, people are biased in their judgments of different appearances; students who look different are judged differently. The only way these black boys can make up for this difference is to be "well behaved" (Kunjufu, 1986; Boykin, 1984; Perry; 1990). Consequently, many young African-American males unfairly receive labels such as **"hyperactive"** or **"slow learner"** which haunt them for the balance of their primary education (The Crisis, 1986; Kunjufu, 1986). Further, labeling can have lasting effects on self-identification and self-esteem, affecting issues of motivation and academic achievement for the balance of the child's educational experience. (Parham & Davis, 1987; Wright, 1991).

Coggins et al (1980) conducted a study of over 200 black male youth who were incarcerated in the Atlanta Youth Development Centers. Their findings revealed that the critical deficit of these youth was a lack of positive self-identity and self-esteem. Given that only 37% of the African-American male prison population had completed the 12th grade and illiteracy levels hovered at 70%, it is conceivable how their experiences in the educational system had been far from positive. This absence of constructive interaction with the school system is reflected in much of the data.

In Detroit, to cite a representative example, studies regarding school discipline and African-American youngsters showed that although black and white students are tardy for class at practically the same rate, African-American students are disproportionately referred to the principal's office for punishment (Dent, 1989). These results are replicative of the findings of many academic records of black males in the elementary and secondary school system.

All over the nation, one of the key factors to this problem is the lack of uniform discipline procedures, combined with liberal suspension policies which leave teachers with too much discretionary authority in the administration of discipline. Further,

African-American males are disproportionately the victims of corporal punishment and suspension. For example, in a study conducted in Milwaukee, African-American males account for 50% of all suspensions, even though they make up 27% of the school system's population. (Whitaker, 1991; Dent, 1989; Kunjufu, 1986).

With regard to academic achievement, numerous studies have shown that African-American males achieve at significantly lower levels than other groups. For example in Milwaukee, 80 percent of the city's black males earn less than a "C" average in high school (Collison, 1991; Whitaker, 1991). In a study of black males in the New Orleans Public Schools, there was a disproportionate number represented in almost all categories of academic failure. While black males represented 43% of the New Orleans' public school population in 1986-87, they accounted for 58 percent of the non-promotions, 65% of the suspensions, 80% of the expulsions, and 45 % of the dropouts (Garibaldi, 1989). Consequently, more African-American males and other non-Asian minorities are being placed in special education classes more often than members of majority groups. They are disproportionately misclassified and placed in classes for the mentally retarded or are tracked into slow learning classes with the possibility of never being mainstreamed. Yet all the while, children from majority groups are being placed in academic areas such as advanced science and math courses that prepare them for college placement in competitive institutions (Task Force, 1990, p.35; Dent, 1989; Kunjufu, 1986). This is another illustration of how the school is perpetuating economic and political stratification (Percell, 1977).

Familial Impact

Societal Perceptions Shape Educational Policy

It is a common belief among many social scientist that African-American parents are unable to provide an appropriate intellectual atmosphere in the home or the kinds of toys and books that promote intellectual growth (Boykin, 1983). All of these characteristics

are assumed to be exacerbated by or otherwise linked to a purported lack of structural integrity in the African-American family, particularly in homes lacking a male head of household. All in all, the picture that emerges is that African-American children have generally grown up in a web of social pathology and inadequacy that leaves them ill-equipped to meet academic demands (Boykin, 1983, p 328).

Empirical evidence, however, shows that children from one-parent homes can and do exhibit high levels of academic achievement.

Johnson, Prom and Wallace (1988) conducted an extensive study on home environment, talented minority youth and school achievement. Their study was directed at assessing the consequences of the changing structure of the American family and determining whether the increasing number of one-parent households headed by females had an effect on student success. And, further, they sought to test their premise that the involvement of African-American and other minority parents is an integral component in improving school performance. Within this general framework, the study examined the home environment of a population of low income, academically talented minority youth--80% African-American, 12% Hispanic, and 4% Native Americans and Asians. The gender composition was 44% female and 56% male. Among their important findings was the fact that a youth's being from a one-parent family did not impede or hinder the child's academic excellence and success. As a matter of fact, students from one-parent families had somewhat higher scores than two-parent families. The trend of the data suggested that the development of academically talented students in low-income African-American families can occur under various environmental conditions and various levels of education.

Finally, the evidence showed that in spite of social hardships and barriers, minority parents who have high aspirations and expectations for their children have a profound influence. The research clearly demonstrates that the children of such parents can and do go on to pursue high levels of education and obtain challenging careers.

These data also support the detailed work of Reginald Clark, whose findings and analysis of the African-American family show that parents of successful students are more optimistic about life and have higher aspirations for their children, regardless of income or number of parents.

Studies of this nature confirm that it is not the number of parents, but the level of parental expectations regarding academic achievement that is the determining factor in the educational achievement of African-American youth.

The Need for Alternative Schools?

Integration in the United States, where it occurred, meant integration as defined by white Americans, and this in turn put African-Americans at the bottom of the hierarchical occupational and income scale. Desegregation was often short-term in that whites fled neighborhoods near black communities or enrolled their children in private schools. Thus, segregation reoccurred in the school systems of cities such as Detroit, Chicago, Memphis, and others, where enrollments once again became as much as 90% black. Such school districts faced major problems achieving parity, primarily due to the increasing lack of public funding. Under those conditions it is not surprising that many African-Americans formed separatist movements or wanted community control of their public schools in order to ensure that these schools would get the same apportionment of public funds per child as white schools (Carnoy, 1972, p 299).

Out of this movement, many independent schools were established by African-American educators and parents. These independent schools were seen as an answer to the educational dilemma that many black children experienced during the struggle for equal educational opportunities in the United States. Many date back to the nineteenth and the early part of this century. Today, a sizable number of independent schools are owned and operated in major urban areas to serve African-American children who reside within the neighborhood. There are about 400 such schools in the U.S., with an estimated enrollment of 52,000 (Ratteray, 1989).

From their many studies at the Institute for Independent Education, Ratteray, et al (1989) found that African-American students do not need to be surrounded by white students and high-income families in order to experience academic success. In a survey of several magnet schools where the enrollment was predominately African-American with large numbers from low-income families, it was found that high expectations on the part of the teachers--that is, believing that the students were capable of high achievement--played a pivotal role in the students' success (Green, 1977; 1987, 1990; McKenzie, 1991).

Schools for African-American Males and Curriculum Options

In the middle of much current controversy are the primary schools with the exclusive focus on young African-American male students. The "immersion" process is a pilot educational program which is being developed and implemented in major urban areas all over the country.

Milwaukee has started African-American Immersion Schools which are designed to emphasize African and African-American culture, build self-esteem and promote rewards for responsible male behavior. Portland, Oregon, is one of the first major school systems in the country to institute ***The African-American Baseline Essays***. Out of the 55,000 students in that system, 74% are white. African-Americans account for the next largest group comprising 15% of the population, but the rates of expulsion for black children in the Portland schools were three to five times higher than for white children. And just as important, there were few African-American teachers to serve as role models. The Baseline Essays are just part of the growing curriculum of the Portland schools, where it has been acknowledged that there is the need for a change in the educational process. In Detroit, Michigan, a Male Academy has been instituted for children from kindergarten through 8th grade. Established by the Detroit Public Schools, the Academy is targeted for African-American males who have been a identified as "at risk." Progressive educators and school boards in other cities such as New Orleans, Dayton, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. have recognized the seriousness of the problem and are instituting similar programs to intervene for black male children.

Spencer Holland (1987), a forerunner in the institution of programs primarily for African-American male youth, states that the fundamental intent of these schools is to prevent the development of negative attitudes toward academic achievement. Further, one of the most crucial psychosocial deficits in the environment of inner city black male youth is the lack of consistent, positive and literate African-American male role models. To provide such role models is the aim of these schools and academies.

"Rites of Passage" programs are also being initiated across the country. These programs are part of the organized efforts on the part of African-American male elders in the community to provide a sense of definition of manhood for the younger males. The Rites of Passage is an ancient African ceremony. Its intent is to shape the identification process and add definition to the development of African-American manhood. Ceremonies that promote socialization are and historically have been an integral part of American and ethnic cultures, e.g., confirmations, weddings, graduations, and Bar Mitzvahs. In more recent generations, however, the African-American community has ceased to practice and recognize the male child's transition into manhood. This is why programs such as these are being implemented, to impede the dramatic increase of young African-American males who find comaraderie in gangs, the drug culture, and the like (Hill, 1987; Kunjufu, 1986).

PROJECTIVE ANALYSIS

At the beginning of this chapter we cited Carter G. Woodson, who recognized that the integral components of African and African-American history were not being taught to our children. Over 60 years later, the same problem still exists --the quiet acceptance of the refusal to teach history the way it was. Woodson recognized, as well as did W.E.B. DuBois, that without a knowledge and firm grasp of our history, we are destined to falter. In understanding our history we are made to realize that we are still in the throes of an educational dilemma. There need to be **fundamental** changes made in the rules, roles, and relationships dictated by our educational policies (QEM, 1990).

Three hundred ten billion dollars is spent on education in the U.S. including colleges and universities, more than what is spent on defense. Although American universities are the best in the world, the elementary and high schools pale in comparison to other countries (Nussbaum, 1988). This approach to spending is counterproductive. It takes a successful elementary school student to have a reasonably successful academic

career. As indicated in the studies cited in this section, it is the prevention strategies in the early school years that can make all the difference. In essence, the United States is getting a lot less for its education dollar than those in other industrialized nations such as Japan and Europe (Nussbaum, 1988; McKenzie, 1991).

Human capital may be defined as an individual's ability, talent, knowledge, training and education. Human capital can increase in value through training and education. Productivity is the principal determinant of growth and well-being (Task Force, 1991). The waste of human capital and the lack of productivity have been the result of the American educational system's awkward maintenance of the status quo. More energy has been wasted in legislation, zoning, budgets, strikes and school boards than in educating children. As a result, IBM Corporation had to teach high school algebra to thousands of workers before they could operate the computers which the company spent millions of dollars to install; the Chemical Bank in New York had to interview over 40 applicants before they could find one who could be successfully trained as a teller (Nussbaum, 1988). These instances of the lack of skills and knowledge are even more apparent in the black urban community.

Further, America's educational system continues to be based on an agricultural model. Even though we are no longer an agrarian society, our school days are not in concert with other industrial and technological societies. Students in the United States attend class only 180 days a year. In France and Germany, the school year extends for 220 days, and Japanese children attend school for 240 days. Consequently, these countries are more competitive in the world market. Japan's burgeoning economic success stems in part from the fact that "its blue collar workers can interpret advanced mathematics, read engineering blue prints, and perform sophisticated tasks in the factory far better than their American counterparts" (Nussbaum, 1988, p 101).

On the other hand, only 4% of the student population in this country choose science or engineering majors. The National Science Foundation warns that there could be a shortfall of 400,000 science and engineering B.A. degrees by the year 2000.

Currently, half of all engineering students at the graduate and post graduate levels are not native born. In 1988, 22% of MIT's freshman class were of Asian descent (Carter & Wilson, 1989). George Campbell, Jr., President of the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME), states that a lucrative field such as engineering requires one to take calculus and physics before graduating from high school. However, taking such courses is the exception rather than the rule for secondary education in the U.S. It is estimated that a mere 8% of all high school students even take calculus. More disturbing than that statistic is the fact that only 47% of African-American students study mathematics beyond algebra I. Campbell goes on to state that most black children are locked out of engineering and a staggering number of other jobs as early as the 10th and 11th grades. To compete in a tight market, students must ideally start preparing for the work world as early as the fourth grade (Graves, 1991, p 98). The most challenging, and the most significant issue as far as the future strength of our economy is concerned, is that minorities will constitute over one third of the work force by the year 2000 (Bureau of Census, 1990; Graves, 1991, Nussbaum, 1988; Task Force, 1990; Children's Defense Fund, 1990; QEM, 1990).

Just last year the National Commission on Children published their interim report. The purpose of this Commission is to propose policy directions for all American children. One of the fundamental assumptions underlying the Commissions goal is that "Every child, regardless of social, economic, and cultural circumstances, should have the opportunity to become a healthy, literate, secure, economically self-sufficient, and productive adult" (p 1). Although the Commission's report is coherent and reflective in its intent, it does not address the group who benefits the least from the system, the African-American male.

The NAACP Maryland Task Force (1990), has examined some of the factors which may contribute to the decline of African-American males in higher education in Maryland and in the nation:

Family income and lack of exposure to the collegiate experiences;

Unfamiliarity with the early "process" of college/academic preparation, such as options available, financial aid and scholarship sources, true cost of tuition at college;

Indicators related to early childhood education;

Alternative plans to enter the military;

Lack of supportive peer group with similar goals and ambitions; and enrollment in community college vocational/technical as opposed to academic programs

Although African-American men have shown increases in high school completion rates, fewer make plans to further their education. This is crucial, because this is a time when the job market demands skills that extend beyond high school.

We firmly believe that it is our responsibility to educate our children.

> Given the probable future developments in education and the labor force in which African-Americans and Hispanics will eventually be the majority, early investment in education is imperative. Every $1 invested in high quality preschool programs such as Head Start saves $6 on lowered costs for special education, grade retention, public assistance, and crime later on. Children formerly enrolled in these programs are more likely than other poor children to be literate, employed, and enrolled in postsecondary education. They are less likely to be school dropouts, teen parents, dependent on welfare, or arrested for criminal or delinquent activity. (Excerpt, Children's Defense Fund, 1990, p 62).

Further, we advocate piloting programs and schools for African-American males based on the following premises:

- ***Such schools emphasize reading, math, science, writing, and communication skills.***
- ***Such schools should focus on enhancing self-esteem and must hold high expectations for academic achievement.***
- ***Such schools should focus on the development of positive values, i.e., hard work, honesty, integrity and total respect for others.***
- ***Finally, since the majority of African-American males attend racially-segregated schools, the issue of "separatism" in the schools is a moot point.***

Given the above conditions, schools for African-American males are defensible.

In this vein, we advocate whatever progressive and positive alternatives there are for African-American males to receive a decent education, to achieve what they have the inherent ability to achieve, and to be productive members of society.

INCARCERATION

"With more than one million people behind bars, the United States has become the world's leading jailer."

T. Brazaitis, Bureau Chief
Cleveland Plain Dealer
January, 1991.

"Sure, it's true we prosecute a high percentage of minorities for drugs. The simple fact is, if you have a population- minority or not - that is conducting most of their illegal business on the street, those cases are easy pickings for the police."

Charles Butler, Assistant Prosecutor
Delaware
Cited from the Los Angeles Times, May 1990

GENERAL DATA

A criminal justice report released in 1979 by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) documented that the United States' rate of incarceration was third highest of the industrialized nations. Now as we enter the 1990s, we have gained the reputation of being the number one jailer in the world, with African-American males making up a disproportionate number of those being jailed.

There are a greater number of offenders being sentenced to prison in the U.S. than 10 years ago. For example, in 1980, there were 196 offenders sentenced to prison for every 1,000 arrests for serious crimes. This figure had increased by 54 percent to 301 per 100,000 in 1987 (Glazer, 1989). **However, the growth of prison populations of the past decade shows that incarceration rates do not rise or fall directly with crime rates.** The crime rate has dropped by 15 percent from 1980 to 1984, but significantly, the number of prisoners has increased by 41 percent. From 1984 to 1989 the crime rate increased by 14 percent, while the number of prisoners rose by a dramatic 52 percent (FBI, 1990). In other words, although the crime rate has dropped by 3.5% since 1980, the prison population has doubled in that period (Mauer, 1990). This increase for the most part has been at the expense of African-American males. In large part, the swelling numbers of people incarcerated can be linked to harsher criminal justice policies of the past decade (Mauer, 1991), another legacy of the Reagan years.

> These policy changes have resulted in a more punitive system overall. Mandatory sentencing laws which require incarceration are now in 46 states. The new sentencing guidelines and harsher drug laws are expected to result in 119 percent increase in the federal prison population form 1987 to 1997 (Sentencing Commission, 1987).

Although some of the disparities in incarceration rates between other countries and the United States can in some degree be explained in terms of differences in prison "systems," what is most apparent is that one of the wealthiest societies in the world has failed to provide a relatively safe society, a society that administers justice equitably (Mauer, 1991).

COMPARATIVE DATA

Notwithstanding differences in reporting of crime and definition of offenses, there is a dramatic difference in the rate of crime for the United States in comparison to other countries.

To gain an accurate perspective on the alarmingly high and continuingly growing prison rolls in this country, it must be pointed out that the United States has a higher incarceration rate than even that of South Africa. The incarceration rate in South Africa is 333 prisoners per 100,000. In the United States the incarceration rate is 426 per 100,000. Taking into consideration that internal protests against South Africa's apartheid regime have been one of the main catalysts for its sizeable prison population, their rate of imprisonment is still significantly below the United States, the self-proclaimed leader of the free world (Sentencing Project, 1990).

If we make a more detailed comparison of South Africa and the United States, we see an even more glaring discrepancy between the rates of incarceration of black men in the two countries. The black male population in the United States as of 1990 was 14,625,000 vs 15,050,642 in South Africa. Yet the rate

of incarceration in the United States of black males is 3,109 per 100,000, while by comparison South Africa's incarceration rates of black males could be considered low at 729 per 100,000. Not only are these differences in incarceration rates statistically significant, but the differences in the ratio of black men in each of the countries dramatizes yet further the disparities here in the U.S. The majority of the population in South Africa is black, whereas only 6% of the U.S. population is comprised of black males (Sentencing Project, 1990).

Given the aforementioned we should keep in mind the following findings:

The United States has the highest known rate of incarceration in the world, with 426 prisoners per 100,000. South Africa is second in the world with a rate of 333 per 100,000, and the Soviet Union third with 268 per 100,000 (Mauer, 1990). It is clear from other reports and surveys that few other nations whose incarceration rates are known approach these levels. Rates of incarceration for Western Europe, for example, are generally in the range of 35-120 per 100,000, and for most countries in Asia, in the range of 21-140 per 100,000 (Penal Reform International, 1990). Even in countries such as the Soviet Union, Poland, and other parts of Eastern Europe, there has been a drop in the rate of incarceration, largely the result of the changing political climate and the release of political prisoners (Mauer, 1990). **Even in South Africa, with all of its share of political upheavals, the incarceration rate has remained stable over the past decade.** The question that remains is why is the United States leading the rest of the world in the development of "another society," a prison society?

Incarceration Data of African-American Males

The Sentencing Project* and the National Urban League have garnered the following data as it relates to the African-American male:

*The Sentencing Project is a non-profit organization established in 1986 to develop sentencing programs designed to promote alternatives to incarceration.

African-American males in the United States are locked up at a rate four times greater than their counterparts in South Africa.

There is a direct correlation between the growth of crime and the disproportionately low incomes available in the African-American community the social and economic decline of our urban areas, the failure in the schools, and lack of institutional support systems in the black community.

Despite these conditions, however, it is the proverbial "War on Drugs" that is one of the largest single factors behind the rise in prison populations during the past decade. The number of African-Americans arrested for drug offenses has increased at a more rapid rate than the arrest rate for the population as a whole.

Most of these offenders, it should be noted, do not use drugs; they sell crack cocaine. Overall, 80% of all cocaine users in the U.S. are white, while only 14% are African-Americans. In illustration of the disparities in the criminal justice system though, we refer to a Minnesota state law (recently held unconstitutional by a county judge) that provides for a four-year sentence for first-time users of crack cocaine, but only probation for first-time users of cocaine in its powdered form. Ninety-two percent (92%) of those arrested on charges of possession of crack in 1988 were black, while 85 percent of those arrested on charges of possessing powdered cocaine were white (Raspberry, 1991).

The number of African-American males in the 20-29 age group entangled in the criminal justice system totals 609,690. The number of African-American males in higher education, 436,000. This translates into nearly one in four black men in the age group of 20-29 on any given day being under the control of the criminal justice system--in prison or jail, on probation or parole.

In related fashion, the proportion of Hispanics in prisons and jails is greater than in the total U.S. Hispanic population. Hispanic males comprised 13% of the jail population and 10% of the prison population in 1984. For white men in this age group, only one in sixteen is under the control of the criminal justice system (U.S. Department of Justice, 1988).

There is growing evidence of a connection between the nation's faltering education system and the increasing crime rates. In 1986 approximately 50% of inmates in state prisons had less than an 11th grade education. In some state prisons, as much as 70 percent of the population is believed to be illiterate (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1988; Kidder, 1990).

Aside from the race factor, illiteracy may be the strongest common denominator among all prisoners (Kidder, 1990). Although juvenile facilities, jails and prisons across the country graduate thousands of students each year in high school equivalency, vocational and college programs, only 20% of state inmates are students (Wiley, 1989).

* One should make note that education programs are not mandatory in the U.S. prison system. Further, there has been no federal legislation regarding compulsory education while in prison, even though studies have shown that it contributes to a significant reduction in recidivism rates.

Some states spend more annually on housing prisoners than the cost of going to an Ivy League school. For example, it cost $850,000 to house 10 prisoners for 5 years (Kidder, 1990), and prosecution, court and incarceration costs taxpayers $45.6 billion in 1985. The total cost of incarcerating more than one million Americans in prisons and jails is estimated at $16 billion per year. The cost of incarcerating the estimated 454,724 African-American male inmates is almost $7 billion a year (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1990).

The National Crime Survey

Historically, there have been negative feelings and a general distrust on the part of non-whites toward the law enforcement establishment and its treatment of people of color.

Stark (1990), a professor at Rutgers University, makes the point that possibly our perception of what goes on in the urban areas concerning the rate of violence may be more of a reflection of official attitudes and behavior than of racial differences. Stark states that the problem with using crime information is that its primary source--data on arrest and imprisonment--may be the product of racial discrimination. The National Surveys of Crime Victims, compiled by confidential interviews, is deemed a far more accurate source about crimes committed than arrest reports. For example, according to the FBI, the proportion of African-Americans arrested for aggravated assault in 1987 was 3 times greater than the proportion of whites. The National Crime Survey, however, found that the actual proportion of blacks and whites committing aggravated assault in 1986 was virtually identical: 32 per 1,000 for blacks; 31 per 1,000 for whites. In another survey, conducted to assess the trends for violent or serious offenses between 1976 and 1980, the findings were that with the exception of 1976 no significant race differences were found.

Stark, in addition, explored the links between African-Americans and drug use. Findings consistently showed that a greater proportion of whites than African-Americans used hard drugs, and that whites use hard drugs more frequently, including heroin and cocaine. These misinformed attitudes about violence in the black community have directly contributed to its severity. Law enforcement and medical assistance have been less than satisfactory because for the most part it is believed that blacks are violence prone. This attitude leads to double standards in terms of how situations are treated and handled. When white or black adolescents commit the same offense, for instance, police are seven times more likely to imprison black youth.

Stark concludes that discriminative attitudes have contributed to the lack of police protection and to medical assistance, to racial bias, and to the perpetuation of the tolerance of violence in our urban African-American communities. Stark states that **"The belief that blacks are more prone than whites to commit acts of violence is a central premise in the view that African-American males in the inner city constitute a new "underclass"....even prominent black academics are tempted to portray inner-city black culture as self-destructive and pathological."** (p 6B).

The Failure of Public Policy and Its Impact on Society

What transpires outside the system is oftentimes a manifestation of what is transpiring internally in the system. For example, **the prosecutor provides the link between the law enforcement and the adjudicatory processes.** The prosecutor is ***unique*** in that there is no other kind of position akin to the duties of this elected official anywhere else in the world. **The decision to charge is generally a function of the prosecutor.**

Therefore, the fate of an individual in terms of whether or not they spend time in prison is usually in the hands of someone who is white, and male, and who has had very little exposure to African-American males outside the criminal justice system. But we should also recognize that (prosecutorial) outcomes are based on the decision of one individual who has been appointed to represent the voters.

In short, it is we the voters that determine who goes to jail.

It is also the voters who determine who the policymakers are.

Over a decade ago national and state policymakers had choices in terms of how the nation's tax dollars would be used in response to higher crime rates. The first option was to build new prisons and jails at a cost of $50,000 per cell and spend $20,000 a

year to house each prisoner. The second option was to spend tax dollars on prevention policies and services, on programs designed to generate employment and provide quality education, on health care and housing, and on programmatic alternatives to incarceration and increased prison cells. The policies of the first option were the ones adopted. But although these policies were chosen, they have not contributed to the abatement of the rate of crime nor to the rate of incarceration. Further, criminologists contend that the system can have an effect on crimes only by increasing the certainty of arrest, not the severity of punishment (Mauer, 1991). Given that the total cost of crime is estimated to be between $26.9 billion and 136.9 billion dollars in 1986 (the range is not narrower because many of the costs of running the system cannot be measured directly), would not billions of these dollars be far better spent in eliminating some of the conditions that breed crime?

A Sociological/Profile Study

Sullivan (1988), a socio-cultural anthropologist, conducted research with males of African-American, Hispanic, and European descent in the three low income neighborhoods in a major urban city. His findings point up the nationwide disparity between the long-term consequences for criminally involved young males of these three groups. The first significant finding was the African-American and Hispanic neighborhoods had much lower income levels and higher crime rates than the white neighborhood, which was primarily working class.

The crime careers of the youths in all three neighborhoods started off similarly but diverged over time as the youths confronted basic differences in economic opportunity as well as differences in local-level social control. As African-American and Hispanic youths went beyond their mid-teens they became heavily involved in crime as a source of fairly regular income. The white youths studied did not follow this route with such frequency for two reasons, both related to characteristics of their local neighborhood.

First, they had more access to youth employment, even though half had left school without diplomas. These jobs were usually part-time and off-the-books and almost entirely located through family members and neighbors who were already employed in the businesses.

Second, they encountered stricter local-level social control. Teenagers who steal and sell drugs usually work close to home. In the white working-class neighborhood, such behavior was not tolerated. They were either confronted by local adults or the police, who often themselves lived in the neighborhood.

In contrast, youth from the Hispanic and African-American communities had a different situation. They had few family or neighborhood-based connections for part-time jobs.

About half of the households in the neighborhoods lived in poverty and were supported by welfare. Those residents who did work usually worked at insecure and low paying jobs.

High rates of female-headed households were another result of the unavailability of decent employment, since adult males without stable employment do not make very desirable heads of households. It was found that this household pattern had profound consequences for the control of local youths who became involved in crime.

Sullivan observed that the poor African-American and Hispanic families attempted to raise their children properly and control their environments, yet they lacked the means to do so.

PROJECTIVE ANALYSIS

The term "endangered species" will be literal for African-American males if the rates of imprisonment continue as they have been into the next century. The National Council on Crime Delinquency Projects that our prison population alone, exclusive of jail inmates, will rise by 68 percent, from 703,000 in 1989 to over 1,133,000 in 1994 (Sentencing Project, 1991).

From assessing the data, it appears as though the main catalyst for incarceration is drug offenses. Given the unemployment situation and the state of the economy for the 90s, drug sales for many African-American youth may continue to present themselves as one viable option to obtain material things. ***But although the number of black males who participate directly in hardcore criminal activities is higher than their white counterparts, it does not by any means constitute the majority of black males*** (Riley, 1986).

The U.S. Department of Justice (1988) offers a profile of the average offender:

1) There are the few offenders who commit crime at a high rate;
2) High rate offenders seldom specialize in one type of crime;

3) Few repeat offenders are full-time criminals;
4) Long term studies show that the more often a person is arrested the greater the chances of being arrested again; and
5) The older the offender at the time of arrest, the longer they are likely to continue their criminal career.

This outline of the typical offender has serious implications for the criminologist who studies the patterns and profiles of those involved in crime and for those of us concerned for the future of our youth. Looking at the disproportionately high incentives for crime that confront African-American males and looking at the profile of a potential offender, the paramount concern is that an inordinate number of young black men are in jeopardy of committing offenses that will begin them on a pattern of "time in the system."

The Sullivan findings we referred to above should be given serious consideration with respect to public policy. Long before Sullivan, however, perhaps the majority of social scientists for the most part, as well as most of the general public, commonly believed that poverty, racial discrimination, and residence in deteriorated inner city environments were the major causes of crime. As a result, during the 1960s many social programs based on these premises were enacted, which provided a wide range of innovative services attempting to reverse these causal linkages. More recently, however, some influential academicians have challenged the idea that poverty, discrimination, and segregation cause crime and other pathologies. Concurrently, public support for crime prevention programs based on enhancing economic opportunities within urban areas has declined significantly (Sullivan, 1988). We are now living with the troubling results of those decisions.

The Sentencing Project has made the following recommendations for public policy, which we feel are comprehensive and could very well address some of the dangerous policies and trends currently in place.

1) Establish a national commission to examine the high rate of imprisonment of African-American males.

2) Direct the General Accounting Office to become involved in determining how social and economic factors are affected by crime.

3) Direct the Justice Department to fund pilot programs to reduce the high rate of incarceration of African-American males.

4) Redirect the "war on drugs" to define drug abuse as a public health problem and not a criminal justice problem.

5) Redirect the focus of law enforcement to address community needs and to prevent crime.

6) Reduce recidivism rates of prisoners by providing effective services.

7) Repeal mandatory sentencing laws.

8) Expand the use of alternatives to incarceration.

9) Engage in a national dialogue on issues of crime and punishment.

Wiley (1989) advocates that the following policies should be implemented regarding the education of prisoners in the system.

A condition of probation should be participation in an educational program.

All prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities should provide comprehensive educational programs.

Participation in an educational program should be a condition for release.

Given the current situation and future prospects, correctional facilities have been accurately termed as the "educators of last resort." (Wiley, 1989, p 8).

CONCLUSIONS

"Unquestionably, the black male has played a significant role in America under some of the most adverse conditions imaginable. He was perceived as a threat to white males in particular, from 1619, the year when blacks first landed on these shores. Legislation was enacted which circumscribed his freedom of movement and limited the options which were available to him. He was denied in many instances the right to live with his family and to exercise his patriarchical functions which were commonplace in his native culture and in the culture of men throughout the world."

Dr. Benjamin Hooks
Director of the NAACP

The above citation is a simple, powerful capsulation of the African-American males' fortitude and resiliency to continue to live in a society where they have been disenfranchised on every level.

In our attempt to formulate this paper on African-American males, we reviewed over 250 articles from journals, magazines and newspapers. We found for the most part that the changes that need to be made are straightforward, yet complex. The common demoninator for all these issues is the goal of parity. Parity, which is essentially the equality of life conditions, has been systematically denied to blacks on many fronts.

Further, African-American males have been adversely impacted by distorted perceptions and unfounded beliefs, beliefs based on isolated and misleading anecdotes, skewed research paradigms, and the powerful, and too often negative, influence of the media.

Although we have concentrated on the many difficulties faced by African-American males in this paper, we would be remiss in our responsibility if we did not acknowledge the many accomplishments that they have achieved. It's not too often that we hear about the dozens of African-American male Ph.D.'s continuing and completing graduate work from the Florida University system in every physical and social science field imaginable. Under the direction of Dr. Ike Tribble, Executive Director of the

Florida Endowment Fund in Tampa, there have been a cadre of black males who have been given guidance and financial support toward completing their doctoral degrees. Dr. Howard Adams, the Executive Director of the National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering in South Bend, Indiana, has assisted many African-American males pursuing their engineering degrees over the past several years; or consider the black businessman who just purchased a dairy which generated sales of $100 million last year. These are the people we do not hear about on the evening news.

In both national and world markets, black men continue to make breakthroughs in the business world. The recent multi-billion dollar merger between Ameritech and Knowledge Data Systems, which is headed by an African-American male, is an illustration of what has been accomplished. Dr. Arnold F. Stancell, Vice President of Mobil Oil Corporation's Exploration and Production Division, is in a position that few Americans, black or white, would ever conceive of occupying. Andrew Young, former Congressman and mayor of the city of Atlanta, now serves as the CEO of the International Division of Law Engineering and is also co-chair of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games.

Equally noteworthy breakthroughs have occurred in politics: Michael White's victory made him Cleveland's second black mayor. An African-American politician waged a serious challenge against Jesse Helms for his Senate seat. On January 13th 1990, Douglas Wilder, an African-American male was sworn in as governor of Virginia at the capital of the former Confederacy. Jesse Jackson in 1988, for quite sometime, was a serious contender as a Democratic presidential candidate. Ronald H. Brown, an attorney, was named Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Under the direction of General Colin Powell, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, the conflict in the Persian Gulf was quelled. Although a disproportionate number of troops were African-American males, they were still willing to fight and represent a country that had vetoed a Civil Rights Bill which was legislated to provide fair and equal treatment for their employment when they returned home.

Yet, while we are recognizing these laudable achievements, we must continue to focus on the vast amount of work that still is before us.

In our discussion of economics and labor, we pointed out that the most influential variables for African-American males are full-time employment and educational status. The changes in the economic picture have ultimately affected those with the least amount of education and lack of appropriate skills needed for recruitment and advancement. The other pertinent reference is to the changes in the socioeconomic status of African-Americans as a whole. There is an increase on both ends of the economic continuum, but the middle is shrinking. However, the poverty level for African-Americans is growing at a faster rate than for those who experience economic well-being. Further, there is the issue of the census undercount, which disproportionately affects African-American males.

Public education has generally not provided access for the African-American male into the better-paying sectors of the labor force. Those with high school diplomas have not reaped the benefits of their education due to changes in the economic sector. For those who do not complete their secondary education, their options become extremely limited. For the African-American male, the rates are entirely too high to be ignored any longer. We are losing from 50% to 60% of our black males to the streets. In one particular Midwest high school which the authors know well the attrition rate for African-American males between 9-12th grades has gone as high as 80-85%. If the black male is not in high school, he will not be on the college campus, but will surely be unemployed.

As discussed at the beginning of this paper, racism is the "invisible variable" that has impeded the process of achieving parity, contributing to the erosion of mores and values in this society. We can watch the news, or read the newspaper and clearly see how much the vestiges of racism continue. The Willie Horton ad shown during the 1988 Presidential Campaign symbolizes the type of ongoing denigration by politicians who use the media to negatively profile black males in this country. Rodney King was beaten

with clubs by several white Los Angeles police officers, while as many as 20 policemen looked on, including their Sergeant. Rodney King could have been a black man with a Ph.D. in nuclear physics, a heart surgeon, or just a regular working person leaving his job after 8 hours of labor. Unquestionably, the police must be blamed for this incident, but the larger society must also share the blame, since these policemen reflect the views and attitude of too many white Americans.

As we near the end of this paper, we must refer to the family. The family for many African-Americans is the primary determinant of our survival in the system and this is where the invisible variable may have had the most costly impact. But in this regard, we should never forget the millions of African-American males all over the country who are hard-working, nurturing parents and responsible members of their communities, but who rarely receive the recognition they deserve for all they do to keep their families together under difficult circumstances.

Lastly, this paper did not touch upon the issue of alcohol, drugs, and other forms of substance abuse, but we acknowledge that this is a major problem facing the African-American community and should receive separate attention in another extended paper.

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